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AUTHOR	Clarke, S. C. T.; Nyberg, V. R.
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ABSTRACT

The report presents findings from a study of gifted programs in six elementary schools in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. In each school, the principal, vice principal, school counselor and many teachers were interviewed. A questionnaire was developed and administered to examine degree of agreement with views ordinarily expressed by experts in gifted education. The two statements for which there was the highest degree of consensus were: (1) for gifted programs to be successful there must be adequate curricular resources and professionals' time; and (2) insofar as possible, gifted pupils should remain in their regular classrooms. The least consensus was found for the existence of a structured gifted program or curriculum in respondents' schools and for requiring that gifted pupils do all of the regular classroom work in addition to the special programs. Evaluation findings center on program goals and objectives; selection procedures; nature of provisions for the gifted; products; satifaction expressed by teachers, students, and parents; and program continuity. Appended are a review of evaluation models and a proposal for increasing service to gifted and talented students in the school district. (CL)

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Programs for Gifted Pupils in Edmonton Catholic Elementary Schools

Planning Services

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Devonian Building, West Tower, 11160 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 0L2

To the Reader:

Re: Evaluation of Programs for Gifted Pupils in the Elementary Schools of Edmonton Catholic School District

This report will be of particular interest and use to school system personnel planning, implementing or reviewing programs for gifted and talented pupils for the first time. The programs in six elementary schools are described and evaluated in terms of their goals and objectives, pupil selection procedures, instruction, results and products, and problems and successes encountered.

Appendix 1 will be of special interest to those responsible for evaluating programs for gifted pupils, particularly programs which are new and in an embryonic and developing state. In Appendix 1 the authors describe and compare two models for evaluation credited to Robert E. Stake. One is the Countenance Model which requires that goals and objectives (intents) be explicitly stated and known in advance. The second is the Responsive Model which is more appropriate when a program is evolving.

This report is the first in a series concerning evaluations of programs for gifted pupils in four school systems.

Sincerely,

H. I. Hastings

H. I. Hastings
Director
Planning Services

IDENTIFYING THE GIFTED AND PROVIDING FOR THEIR EDUCATION

AN EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BASED PROCEDURES

IN THE EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

PART I: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRADES

Funded by the Planning Service Branch of Alberta Education
Through the County of Strathcona

S.C.T. Clarke and V.R. Nyberg

December, 1984

EC180354

In 1984 six elementary schools in the Edmonton Catholic School System were studied in order to evaluate the programs and procedures being developed for educating gifted pupils. The 60 page report on the project included a description of the provisions in each school. Such matters as the principles upon which provisions were based, procedures for identification, the philosophy involved and public relations matters were dealt with in the various descriptions.

The procedure used in gathering data was first to interview, in each school, the principal, vice principal, school counsellor (if any) and most of the teachers. A questionnaire, based on the 50 interviews carried out and on the literature related to education of the gifted, was constructed and validated against the interview responses. Ten items from the questionnaire constituted a Gifted Attitude and Knowlege Scale, the scores of which indicated the degree of agreement with views ordinarily expressed by experts in the field of education for the gifted. The report provided the average score for staff of each of the six schools. It also reported on teachers' responses to each of the 20 questionnaire items. The two statements for which there was the highest degree of consensus (in this case, agreement with the statements) were as follows:

> For gifted programs to be successful it is essential to have adequate curricular resources and professionals' time.
>
> Insofar as possible, gifted pupils should remain in their regular classrooms.

The two statements for which there was the least consensus (many teachers agreed and many disagreed) were as follows:

> There is a structured giftedness program or curriculum in our school.
>
> In addition to the special programs, gifted pupils should be required to do all of the regular classroom work.

The evaluation was concentrated on seven areas as follows:

> goals and objectives and their evaluation;
> selection procedures and their evaluation;
> nature of provisions for the gifted and their evaluation;
> expected results and their evaluation;
> products and their evaluation;
> satisfactions expressed and their evaluation;
> problems encountered and their evaluation.

In all of the schools the provisions for the gifted were in an evolutionary or developmental stage, which meant that there was little to describe and evaluate with respect to outcomes of the

special provisions.

Four conclusions and recommendations were given, as follows:

1. Provisions for the gifted are more likely to endure if they are planned and delivered by the regular teaching staff. Provisions that depend on outside experts tend to collapse when his/her services are withdrawn.

2. Provisions for the gifted presently in place depend to a large part on extra duties, voluntarily assumed, by some of the staff members. This is an unstable situation.

3. The central office consultant probably has as much practical knowledge of educating gifted pupils as anyone in the province. His services have, however, been spread too thinly, and as a result much of his effort has not been as productive as it might have been had it been more concentrated. Additional contacts, with some interest and expertise, are needed in the schools so that the consultant's experience can be used to advantage.

4. The school system has some worthy provisions for gifted elementary pupils in place. Further development is needed if a PROGRAM for gifted pupils is to be developed. In particular, a clear set of goals is needed, along with suggestions for instruction and evaluation. A centrally located resource room for teachers is needed, along with some plan for providing inservice education for teachers involved with the gifted program.

The report concluded with two appendices. One presented and commented on the models of evaluation employed in this study. The other outlined a proposal, adopted by the Board, for increasing service to gifted and talented students in the district.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people cooperated in conducting this evaluation of school based procedures for Identifying the Gifted and Providing For Their Education. Dr. Clarence Rhodes, Education Consultant, Alberta Education, gave assistance from the first stage of planning the project, to the final stage of reviewing the first draft of the report.

Appreciation is expressed to Dr. John Brosseau, Superintendent of the Edmonton Catholic Separate School District # 7, and to the following members of his inner staff:

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Miss Theresa Ford, Supervisor of Language Arts,
Mr. Don Delaney, Consultant - Gifted.

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Mr. Dan Kinal, Principal of St. Theresa School,
Mr. Ab Kirdeikis, Principal of St. Bonaventure School,
Mr. Wally Laschuk, Principal of Ann Fitzgerald School,
Mr. Ron Semkow, Principal of St. Boniface School,
Mr. George Severin, Principal of Bishop Savaryn School.

The assistance provided by the teachers in the six schools listed above is gratefully acknowledged.

S. C. T. Clarke
V. R. Nyberg

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Edmonton Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 7 is located in the city of Edmonton. In 1983-84 the district had 13,774 pupils and 590 elementary school teachers in 43 elementary schools and 29 elementary-junior high schools. For the past ten years there has been an increasing interest in special provisions for the gifted. In 1974 one elementary school initiated a pilot project in this area. By 1978 the teacher who volunteered for this work had been designated as an itinerant teacher of the gifted for slightly more than half-time. By 1981 he was appointed consultant for gifted education for the district. While most schools made some provisions for education of the gifted, several had identifiable programs which used the services of this consultant.

In 1983 it was proposed that six of these schools should be studied intensively, especially with respect to the provisions made for gifted pupils. In 1984 arrangements had been completed to have this study carried out by a team of evaluators external to the system. The project, funded by Alberta Education, was part of a larger scheme to study provisions being made for gifted pupils in four school systems.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of the study was to evaluate some of the different types of provisions for the gifted that were in operation. The intention was to determine which of the programs were most effective in terms of general criteria of education and in terms of specific criteria specified by the school system and also by the schools.

1.3 METHOD OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Evaluation Model

The general procedure employed in conducting the study was to follow the evaluation model devised by Stake (1967). This model calls for data to be gathered under three main headings. The first, ANTECEDENTS, deals with activities that must be conducted before instruction begins. For example, the procedures for selecting the pupils who would receive special instruction, and special arrangements for facilities and staffing, would be studied. The second aspect, TRANSACTIONS, involves such things as the curriculum to be followed and the instructional methods to be employed for the gifted pupils. The third heading, OUTCOMES, deals with the growth that take place in the students, in such areas as academic achievement, attitudes and social relations. Each of these broad headings is, in turn, subdivided into four parts. These are: INTENTS, which describes what was planned under each of the three main headings; OBSERVATIONS, which out-

lines what actually takes place; STANDARDS, which describes what occurs in similar school systems; and JUDGMENTS, which consists of statements by the evaluators as to how good the various provisions are.

This model of evaluation has been widely used. It is usually called the Countenance Model, after the title of the 1967 article "The Countenance of Educational Evaluation." As the study progressed, it became increasingly clear that this model was not entirely appropriate for the evaluation of experimental, emerging and developing procedures. Stake had come to similar conclusions, possibly based on his 1971 "Evaluation of TCITY, the Twin-City Institute for Talented Youth." In 1975, in "Evaluating the Arts in Education" he outlined procedures he termed "Responsive Evaluation." One major feature of the responsive approach is personal observations (eg. interviews) to ascertain purposes and concerns. These specify for the evaluator the kinds of data and information needed to deal with or respond to the purposes or concerns. Another feature of the responsive model is careful selection of the purposes and concerns to be reported on, and different reports for the different groups. Some of these procedures were used in the present study. Further detail on Stake's models are provided in Appendix I, Models of Evaluation.

1.3.2 Programs Studied

It was decided that six of the schools in the Edmonton Catholic system would be studied intensively; two which had made special provisions for the gifted for the longest period of time, two which were just starting to make special provisions, and two which were in between with respect to the duration of the special provisions. These schools were located in various parts of the city.

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTING THE DATA

2.1 PROCEDURES EMPLOYED

2.1.1 Overview of Procedures

Fifty interviews were conducted in the six schools selected. In each school the principal, the vice-principal, the school counsellor (if there was one), and the teachers who had gifted pupils in their classes were interviewed, along with other teachers. Based on these interviews, and the literature on education for gifted pupils, a questionnaire was constructed and distributed to the participants through the school principals. The questionnaire was, in part, validated against the statements recorded in notes taken during the interviews. Table 2.1, below, gives information describing the six schools, the total number of staff and the number of interviews conducted.

TABLE 2.1

DATA FOR SCHOOLS CHOSEN FOR THE STUDY

School	Academic Staff Total	Interviewed	Pupils	Grades	Program
A	18	10	352	K - 6	New
B	17	10	365	K - 5	Old
C	11	7	254	K - 7	Old
D	13	7	214	K - 6	Mid
E	17	8	310	K - 7	Mid
F	12	8	234	K - 6	New
Totals	88	50	1729		

Note: Academic Staff included principals, vice-principals, counsellors and teachers.

2.1.2 The Interviews

All of the interviews were conducted in the schools toward the end of May, 1984. Teachers were told that the purpose was to obtain their views on giftedness. The interviews were all conducted by Clarke, who has had considerable experience with this procedure. The interviews were relatively unstructured, in that only two broad questions were posed:

1. What is giftedness?

2. What should the school do about gifted students?

There were minor variations in the wording of the questions but the substance was uniform. The first question was followed up, when necessary, with a question to get the teacher's views on procedures for identification of the gifted. The second question

was followed, when necessary, by a query regarding the evaluation of various provisions for the gifted.

A written record was kept openly and each staff member was invited to read the interview record and correct it as required. The typical interview required half an hour. Ordinarily, an interview record filled one sheet of standard notepaper. Only a few required a second sheet.

The interviews were first used to obtain a general picture or description of the provisions for the gifted in each school.

2.1.3 The Questionnaire

A questionnaire containing 20 Likert-type items was prepared, using input from the interviews and from the literature on education for the gifted. In addition the two most frequently mentioned problems or dilemmas were presented. Responses to the latter called for written reactions.

The questionnaires were sent to the school, distributed by the principals, returned to the principals and then forwarded to the researchers. The return was 75 out of a possible 88, or 85 percent. As shown in Table 2.1, 50 of these 88 staff members, or 57 percent, had been interviewed previously.

The interviews were used to validate the questionnaire. Because it was clear from the interviews that there were school differences in staff views on some matters, a sample of the interview returns from each school was selected for special study. Approximately one quarter of the interview records was selected randomly from each school. This resulted in a total of 14 records being selected. The breakdown was as follows: school A - 3; school B - 3; schools C, D, E, and F - 2 each. Each interview document was examined to determine whether any statement recorded was the subject of any of the questionnaire items or of one of the dilemmas. The two sources of response were then compared for agreement or possible disagreement. A few examples are given below.

A teacher from School A, in response to Dilemma 1, "Role Models or Extra Work" wrote:

> Special help for regular classroom teachers such as materials for gifted - special programs at a teacher's fingertips for her gifted students - with added help from consultants and inservice.

The interview record for this teacher contained these comments:

> It might be good to inservice a group of people or at least one from every school so that at least one person knows about the gifted, their problems, etc.

From the same school, a teacher with 15 years experience marked

AGREE for item 14 of the questionnaire which states:

> The special needs of gifted pupils can be taken care of in the regular classroom by the classroom teacher.

The interview record for this teacher contains these statememts:

> Over my 15 years of teaching I have run into some gifted kids and I have been able to challenge them in the regular program. I expect more of them, won't accept laziness..... They can be challenged in a regular program.

From the same school, a teacher responded to item 18 with DISAGREE. Item 18 was:

> Teachers can identify gifted pupils in their classrooms with a high degree of accuracy.

The interview record for this teacher reads as follows:

> For an ordinary teacher, identifying what is a gifted child is a problem. Do you go by the marks? Some who work hard get high marks but aren't gifted, and some who don't get high marks might be gifted in certain areas.

A validation which did not consist of agreement between ideas expressed in the interview and on the questionnaire was exhibited by a teacher in school E. The first statement recorded on the interview record was "I don't really know much about it...." This teacher marked DON'T KNOW for 12 of the 20 items on the questionnaire!

One final example of validation by agreement is the interview record for the principal of school F which states:

> We have never used the term "gifted." Gifted brings with it many negative connotations.

He marked AGREE for item 2 which was:

> The term "gifted" should be avoided in naming a program for the gifted.

This analysis showed agreement on every view which was expressed in both the questionnaire responses and the interviews. Because the subject was education and the respondents were from school staffs, and because the time between the two types of response was not great (within a month), the agreement found was perfect. In addition, one teacher basically said in the interview "I don't know much about giftedness" and marked 12 out of 20 items of the questionnaire DON'T KNOW. It is concluded that the questionnaire was valid in the sense that actual views of the teachers were being determined.

An additional use was made of the questionnaire responses. In order to obtain a total score representing a measure of agreement with generally accepted views on the education of the gifted, those items exemplifying expert opinion were selected. Half of the twenty items were so identified. These ten items were given the name, Gifted Attitude and Knowledge Scale, and the total score obtained was considered to represent a degree of agreement with conventional, informed wisdom on the topic of educating gifted pupils. The items and score values are shown on below.

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neither agree nor disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, DK = Don't Know.

ITEM	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
1. A sound provision for gifted pupils is to give them work from a higher grade.	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. The regular school curriculum adequately provides for the needs of gifted children.	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Other children in a classroom generally do not know who the gifted pupils are unless the teacher so labels them.	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Special programs or curricula designed for the gifted are actually suitable for every child.	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Gifted pupils can be identified at an early age, such as Grade 1 or even kindergarten.	1	2	3	4	5	0
13. For gifted programs to be successful it is essential to have adequate curricular resources and professionals' time.	1	2	3	4	5	0
14. Special needs of gifted pupils can be taken care of in the regular classrooms by the classroom teachers.	5	4	3	2	1	0
16. Gifted children are usually "living in their own little world," out of touch with reality.	5	4	3	2	1	0
17. In addition to the special programs, gifted pupils should be required to do all of the regular classroom work.	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. Gifted pupils can work on their own on individual projects and do not re-						

quire teacher assistance in planning, monitoring and culminating projects. 5 4 3 2 1 0

A score of 50 on this scale would represent perfect agreement with informed, conventional opinion. A score of 10 would represent perfect disagreement, provided the respondent did not choos Don't Know (DK) for any item. A score of 30 (an average response of 3.00 over the ten items) would represent neither agreement nor disagreement.

The mean score for all of the staff members of each school was obtained (see Table 4.4). This score might be interpretd as an indication of the extent to which staff members were in tune with informed, or expert opinion.

2.2 FOLLOW-UP

In November, 1984, a follow-up was conducted for the purpose of verifying information received through interviews and for gathering additional detailed information. This follow-up took the form of a telephone conversation with the principal of each of the six schools being studied. The procedure followed in most cases was to telephone the school secretary, describe the purpose of the call, and leave a list of the questions that would be asked of the principal during a subsequent telephone call. The purpose of this procedure was to give princpals an opportunity to gather their thoughts, and perhaps check on a few details from their files before answering the questions.

The questions left with the school secretaries are given below.

1. How were the students identified?
2. What was the nature of the special provisions?
3. What were the expected results of the special provisions?
4. What was the perceived level of satisfaction of teachers, students and parents?
5. Was "elitism" a problem?
6. Were there tangible products?
7. What problems, if any, were encountered?

During the course of the discussion the matter of whether the provisions were being continued in the 1984-84 school year was brought up.

Information obtained in the spring and in the fall was combined and dealt with as input information for the evaluation.

CHAPTER 3: PROVISIONS FOR THE GIFTED

3.1 BACKGROUND

One experience of the consultant in gifted education for the Edmonton R.C.S.S.D. #7 was that if provisions are planned by and made by someone external to the school, these provisions are not regarded by the school staff as "ours." If the services of this external person were to be withdrawn, a likely result would be that the provisions would no longer be available. Another was the need for inservice education for teachers. A third was a serious questioning of the provision which is called "pull out," that is, taking the gifted out of class. A fourth had to do with selection of those who would receive provision for the gifted, particularly, doubt about the over reliance on IQ.

On the basis of these and other experiences the consultant sought to establish school based provisions, which he hoped would grow in the system without him. He also sought to make concern for the gifted part of all educational concerns, so that gifted education would be part of all education. He piloted the identification and selection procedures associated with the Individual Program Plan Model. (Commencing in September, 1984, a proposal to implement this model in six elementary schools was approved by the Board.)

With respect to the six schools which were studied intensively, there follows a description of provisions in each, the principles on which the provisions were based, and other aspects as seen by the school staff. These descriptions were prepared from the interviews and were submitted to the schools for review. The revised version (if any revisions were proposed) is presented below. The reader will notice that while there were common elements, as might be expected since all schools were served by the same consultant, there were great differences in emphasis. The uniqueness of provisions and principles is apparent.

3.2 PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS

3.2.1 Program in School A

School A had 16 classroom teachers and a principal and vice-principal, each of whom also taught, a librarian, and a part-time counsellor. It had 352 pupils in Grades K to 6.

The program for the gifted was based on a number of principles:

- Each child's potential should be developed to the full, for his own benefit and in order to serve society.

- Gifted children should be kept with other children as much as possible. Mainstream rather than segregate.

- The program should be completely voluntary.

- The program should avoid the term "gifted."

Identification commenced in 1983-84 and involved five distinct steps:

1) selecting students with IQ 120 or more as recorded on the cumulative record cards;
2) asking teachers to name two or three gifted students in their classes;
3) comparing results;
4) asking teachers to complete Renzulli rating scales;
5) contacting parents, explaining the challenge club, and seeking approval of the child's participation.

As of May, 1984, the challenge club program was restricted to Grades 2 and 3, and involved 12 students. There were many clubs available to Division II students: athletic teams; rope skipping; computer; choir; newspaper club; jazzersize club; house leagues in basketball, soccer, volleyball, track and field, dodgeball; etc. The challenge club had produced a play "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" but at the time the school was visited the program consisted of computer activities conducted by two teachers, each with six pupils, once a week for half an hour at noon. Evaluation of student progress was informal.

3.2.2 Program in School B

School B had 15 teachers, a principal and vice-principal each of whom also taught, a part-time librarian, and a part-time counsellor. It had 365 pupils in Grades K to 5.

The school staff spent a good deal of time in previous years considering various program alternatives for gifted children. Possible programs were as follows:

1. Special classes, segregated for perhaps one day per week.

The advantages are:

a) one teacher would have responsibility for this class;
b) classroom teachers would not have an added work load;
c) less material would be required in contrast with bright children being taught within each classroom;
d) one teacher could follow the progress of the younger students placed in the program from year to year.

The disadvantages are:

a) possibility of parental pressure for placement;
b) the classroom teacher may have to organize class time;
c) membership in a segregated class would be relatively inflexible;
d) criteria for placement would be relatively strict;
e) special class placement does not solve the problem of specially bright children always being finished their assignments early;

f) what goes on the the special class may not have any relation to what is being covered in regular classes: it is hard to use the special class as an extension of classroom subjects.

2. Grade-level special classes; i.e. one class of gifted students for Grade 1, another for Grade 2, etc. Again, the students would attend on a part-time basis (this assumes that a large school is involved).

The advantages are:

a) materials used in the class, projects, topics, etc. could be suited to the grade level and would be under the control of those teachers only;
b) easy to tailor the program to suit the curriculum or provide extension to topics covered in class;
c) could share results of special projects such as experiments, reports, plays, etc. with the rest of the grade;
d) students in the special classes would remain and be seen as part of that grade, and as a result there would be less stigma than in program 1, above;
e) membership in this class would be more flexible - students could be placed for short term or long term or on a rotation basis;
f) would allow students with particular talents or interests to be recognized since criteria for placement could be flexible.

The disadvantages are:

a) the teachers at each grade level would have to be able to work together closely and agree on what is to be done in the special class;
b) one teacher per grade level would have to be released to teach the special class, or an extra teacher per grade provided;
c) the teacher of the special class would need much input at each grade level in order to have the special class relate to the regular class.

3. Two special classes, one for Division I, one for Division II. Again, students would attend on a part-time basis.

The advantages are:

a) students across grade levels could work cooperatively;
b) older students could be used to help younger ones;
c) continuity - students entering the program could have progress followed in next year;

The disadvantages are:

a) fewer students could be accommodated than in previous alternatives, thus stricter selection criteria needed;
b) wide discrepancy of ages and interests;
c) less relation between what is done in the special class and what is done in the regular classrooms;

d) the in-class problem of brighter pupils finishing early remains;
e) staffing - see program 2.

4. In-class program, self contained within each classroom.

The advantages are:
a) the program would be under the total control of the classroom teacher;
b) each teacher knows the needs - interests - talents of his/her students best;
c) there is no stigma for students in any "special" placement;
d) could be used to provide motivation for some students;
e) more students can participate in the program;
f) provides greatest relationship with in-class topics.

The disadvantages are:
a) necessitates a greater amount of teacher time and work than other options;
b) more expensive in materials to have program operating in every class;
c) could result in a lot of duplication of material;
d) with many children handling materials, they would wear out faster;
e) would have to try to include every child in the class in some way to avoid having some students left out.

After careful staff consideration of the program possibilities outlined above, and their perceived advantages and disadvantages, the staff selected the in-class program. The principles on which the program was based were as follows:

It is very desirable to avoid an "elite, separate, better than others, don't belong in the regular class or community" feeling.

Every pupil should have an opportunity to profit from special provisions.

The program should be truly voluntary, free from both student, school, and parent pressure to participate.

Identification procedures when the program is in-class quite naturally also become in-class. There was no mention of schoolwide procedures.

The school emphasizes enrichment within the classroom. The enrichment experiences described appear to apply to the whole class. However, there were also accounts of very exceptional children (eg. a Grade 4 boy writing a book on sports) and their projects, but it appears that their identification and initial program stimulus came from the central office specialist.

3.2.3 Program in School C

School C had a principal and a vice-principal, each of whom also taught, a crisis counsellor shared with four other schools, a part-time library aide, and 10 classroom teachers, one of whom was part-time. It had a Grade 1 - 2 split classroom, one classroom each for Grades 1 - 6, and three Grade 7 rooms. In all there were 254 pupils in Grades 1 to 7.

This school had been involved in a gifted program that commenced in 1974. At first, a specialist came out to the school. He helped identify the gifted, planned programs for them, taught small groups, and assisted teachers by providing suggestions as well as materials. Staff reported an unfortunate side effect from the "pull out" procedure which was employed for teaching small groups: the pupils became snobbish, "know-it-all," and elitist. Teachers and other students did not like this.

When the "add-on" program provided by the specialist was discontinued because his duties had become quite onerous, the teachers were not prepared to pick up the slack. It had not been perceived as the school's program. However, one parent (a qualified teacher) was so happy with the results of the gifted program in relation to her own children that she came back as a volunteer for four hours per week and worked with the gifted.

It appeared that a program for the gifted could be killed by the elimination of a staffing component on which it relied.

There remained several activities in which the gifted pupils participated: public speaking (school-wide and system wide, Grade 7); speech arts (Grade 6); solo work by gifted musicians in Band; computer work through a club and through a Grades 4 - 7 computer program for interested pupils; piano lessons by a private instructor in release-time school hours (for a fee); swimming lessons (some were especially talented and became competitive swimmers); and, of course, special projects related to class work.

The enthusiasm connected with a gifted program was gone. There remained no formal identification procedure, no special program, and if the gifted were identified the teachers would probably feel, "Now I've got to go out and set up a special program for them." At a time of staff cuts and of larger classes, "The excitement about a gifted program is gone" was the feeling expressed by one teacher. Yet teachers recognized its importance.

3.2.4 Program in School D

School D had a principal who also taught, a vice-principal who taught approximately three-quarters of the time, a part-time counselor, a part-time library aide, and eleven teachers. The

enrolment was 214 pupils in Grades K to 6.

Four gifted pupils had been identified, two in each of two grade two classes. They had been picked out in the previous year by a procedure similar to that described for School A.

The program for these students consisted of what could be done in the classroom plus a visit once a week from a specialist. On a recent visit the four gifted children had been taken to a nearby pond and had brought home specimens of pond water which had been kept in an aquarium in one of the rooms, where all students could observe what happened. It was intended that the gifted students would prepare material on (say) tadpoles and present this to the whole class.

The principles on which the program was based were as follows:

> Gifted children should be worked with each day, perhaps for half and hour.
>
> Acceleration in the curriculum should be avoided. Instead, go into the curricular areas deeper, do things that require more thinking to solve problems.
>
> Segregation of the gifted should be avoided. It is not good to separate them as "better" pupils.
>
> In the future, each year a grade should be added so that each grade, 1 - 6, would be eligible for a gifted program as pictured above.

One teacher with gifted students in his room favored a resource type teacher of the gifted, stationed in the school, largely to encourage the gifted. The other reported that on a standardized reading test, the two gifted pupils were third and fifth from the top.

Appropriate materials had been supplied by the specialist. Both teachers held the view that individual projects were not successful at this grade level because the pupils in Grade 2 did not have the skills or attention span and required regular supervision.

No different procedures for evaluating progress of pupils involved with the special provisions were mentioned.

3.2.5 Program in School E

School E had 15 teachers, a principal and assistant principal who also taught, a crisis counselor, and a secretary-librarian. It had 310 pupils enrolled in grade K to 7.

Three years ago the school started in Grades 2 and 3 to identify, through teacher nominations, students who might be gifted. The

community heard about the matter, and felt that something was being done whereby children received a little extra, so "everyone tried to get their kids into the program." A Teacher Improvement Program grant was awarded to a teacher who used the funds to secure materials for the gifted, most of which did not remain in the school when the teacher left. The specialist from central office and the school began to think more seriously about identification based on a teacher-parent questionnaire, psychologist's testing, and teacher nomination. As of June, 1984, there were nine pupils identified as gifted, seven of whom were in Division I.

The philosophy expressed in the school was that a beginning was being made, and it "was about time." There was considerable staff agreement as follows:

> Insofar as possible, the student remained in the classroom.
>
> "Pullout" was not opposed. The danger of labelling and the pupil's feeling that "I'm gifted" was recognized but the staff felt it could be overcome.
>
> Parental help was welcomed and recognized, but it was also recognized that some parental intervention was not helpful.
>
> There is a start on a program but so far there is no real structure.

It was generally agreed that what was required to make a program successful was professionals' time. That is why "pull out" was accepted: it was the view of staff that the classroom teacher was already overloaded and should not be asked to do more.

Evaluation of special projects was recognized as a genuine difficulty. Proposals included student enthusiasm, closure (the project was completed) and product.

3.2.6 Program in School F

School F had 10 teachers, a principal and vice-principal, each of whom also taught, a teacher-aide librarian, but no counsellor. It had 234 pupils in grades K - 6.

Fourteen gifted pupils had been identified as of May, 1984, four in Grade 3 and two in each of the other grades 1 - 6. The procedure employed follows.

1. The resource room teacher went through student profile cards and using Renzulli's model of giftedness, generated a list of potential candidates.

2. The system specialist gave a one hour talk to teachers on the nature of giftedness and teachers were asked to pick out candidates based on the Renzulli model.

3. There was probably an 80% overlap on the two lists. Cross referencing narrowed the list to 29.

   At this stage a first newsletter was set to parents of the 29, describing what had been done to date, defining the basis of selection (above average general abilities, high level of task commitment, high levels of creativity), informing parents that initially only 13 students could be accommodated in the challenge program, and listing the objectives of the program:

   a) to encourage independent study reflecting student interest;
   b) to provide assistance to homeroom teachers for enrichment for capable students;
   c) to maximize time on task and minimize risk of boredom for pupils selected;
   d) to expand the concept of the resource room to include a centre for resources for students other than remedial.

   The limitation in finances for curricular resources ($350) was stated, and a parent authorization for assessement was included.

4. Every homeroom teacher was given a Renzulli/Hartman rating scale to rate those students out of the 29 who were in their class. They were encouraged to confer.

5. Student teachers and the system specialist did compilations and final assessments, and reduced the number to 14.

6. Each of the 14 students was asked to complete a "Learning Styles Inventory" by Renzulli/Smith.

A second Challenge Program Communique was sent to parents.

Because these steps were not completed until April, materials were purchased with the advice of the system specialist, and once a week for half an hour to a full hour the students worked with either the resource room teacher or the principal on such exercises as problem solving, magic square problems, creativity exercises, and similarities. In addition, similar exercises were available for the student to work on in class during free time, or at home. It was expected that individual program plans would commence in the fall.

The principles on which the program was based were as follows:

The term "gifted" should be avoided.

The term "intelligence" should be avoided.

The needs of individual pupils were paramount; i.e. the program was to be student oriented.

The program should have a rationale, objectives, a centre with resources which could foster true enrichment rather than "more of the same."

The program should provide an additional service to the classroom teacher.

Because the program was designed for individual program plans, the students selected had to be able to work on their own.

Looking ahead to evaluation of student progress, the teachers identified the following ways of collecting data:

Ask the participants. Did they enjoy the program? Were they interested? Had they learned anything? Had they been introduced to any new interest area?

Teacher observation of participant's attitudes, eagerness, willingness to share new ideas developed from projects, specialized vocabulary growing out of projects, etc.

Products, if the projects eventuated in such.

Completion of projects.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

4.1 ITEMS 1 - 20

4.1.1 Description of Procedures

The responses to each of the Likert-type "agree-disagree" items are presented below, in three groups. The first group represents high commonality of view or strong consensus. The second group represents considerable consensus, but less than exhibited in the first group. The third group represents divided opinion or divergence of view, from least to most divergent. The reader is reminded that in fact the dividing lines are arbitrary, and as might be expected, there is a continuum from consensus to divergence. Nevertheless, there is a marked difference in group response between consensus and divergence.

Ten items out of the twenty were selected to obtain a Giftedness Attitude and Knowledge Score (GAKS). These items state the conventional wisdom, or expert opinion, on various aspects of giftedness. No doubt, if some experts read this they will not agree that these items in fact do represent expert opinion. As is true in many growing areas, expert opinion often has not completely crystallized. Be that as it may, for what it is worth a separate score on the total of these ten items was calculated. The GAKS items are marked with an asterisk.

Questionnaire items were analysed by school, however, on only three items, 6, 15 and 17, were school differences sufficient to warrant presentation by school. In the analysis which follows, results by school are presented for these three items only.

The number before each item denotes its order in the questionnaire. The numbers beneath each item show the distribution of the scores of the 75 respondents: the number on the left is the tally for Strongly Disagree (SD), then D, then Neither Agree nor Disagree (N), then Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA). Where a significant number marked it, a sixth number on the right, Don't Know (DK) is included. The next line gives the sum of the disagree scores (SD plus D) followed by the sum of the agree scores (A plus SA) for convenience of the reader. Finally, the average score made by those who expressed an opinion is presented; i.e. responded with 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. An average score of 3 would demonstrate perfectly divided, or a completely neutral opinion.

4.1.2 Strong Consensus Group

*13. For gifted programs to be successful it is essential to have adequate curricular resources and professionals' time.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	1	0	0	21	52
Disagree/Agree Summary	1	73			
Average Response	4.7				

This item is marked with an asterisk, which indicates that it contributed to the GAKS. It was the 13th item on the questionnaire. One respondent marked it Strongly Disagree (SD), none marked it Disagree (D), or Neither Agree nor Disagree (N), 21 marked it Agree (A) and 52 marked it Strongly Agree (SA). Combining the disagree responses (SD and D) produced a total of 1, and combining the agree responses (A and SA) produced 73. Since only 74 responded, one person either did not do this item, or marked it Don't Know (DK). In fact, it was the latter. This item exhibited most consensus.

The average score on this item was 4.7, where 4 represents Agree, and 5 represents Strongly Agree.

11. Insofar as possible, gifted pupils should remain in their regular classrooms.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	0	2	11	53	27
Disagree/Agree Summary	2	60			
Average Response	4.1				

This item, the eleventh on the questionnaire, did not contribute to the GAKS score. The distribution of responses is shown as for item 13, as are the totals for the Disagree responses and the Agree responses and the average response.

This item exhibited the second most consensus.

*3. The regular school curriculum adequately provides for the needs of gifted children.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	24	43	4	2	1
Disagree/Agree Summary	67	3			
Average Response	1.8				

This item contributed to the total Gifted Attitude and Knowledge Score. The distribution of responses from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree was as shown. After combining, the disagree score was 67 and the agree score was 3. This item was third with respect to consensus. The average score was 1.8, where 1 represents Strongly Agree and 2 represents Disagree.

*16. Gifted children are usually "living in their own little world," out of touch with reality.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	21	43	5	3	0
Disagree/Agree Summary	64	3			
Average Response	1.9				

The interpretation follows the pattern provided above.

*19. Gifted pupils can work on their own on individual projects and do not require teacher assistance in planning, monitoring, and culminating a project.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	18	38	2	4	1
Disagree/Agree Summary	56	5			
Average Response	1.7				

These five items exhibit most consensus, ranging from very nearly complete in the first to somewhat less than complete in the last. Four were represented in the Giftedness Knowledge and Attitude Score (see Table 2.1). Four of them are very close to classroom or school practice: 13, 11, 3, and 19. As might be expected, matters with which school staff members are most familiar exhibit most consensus.

4.1.3 Neither Consensus Nor Divergence

This is the "middle ground" or in between group. The five items are ranked in order from consensus to divergence, but tend in fact to have an approximate split of 1 to 6.

12. Many parents, upon hearing about a program for the gifted, would like to get their children, even though not gifted, into the program.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	0	5	14	38	9
Disagree/Agree Summary	5	47			
Average Response	3.8				

This item did not contribute to the GAKS and was number 12 on the questionnaire. The distribution of responses from Strongly Disagree (0) to Strongly Agree (9) was as shown. The combined disagree responses was 5, while the total of the agree responses was 47. The average score of 3.8 was close to the value of 4 that represents an "Agree" opinion. Because this item is not shown in tabular form there were no marked school differences.

*8. Special programs or curricula designed for the gifted are actually suitable for every child.

	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
Summary of Responses	14	43	5	6	1	6
Disagree/Agree Summary	57	7				
Average Response	2.1					

This item is interpreted as above, except that it did contribute to the GAKS and that 6 respondents marked it "Don't Know" (DK).

5. No real enrichment occurs in regular classrooms in so-called enrichment programs.

	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
Summary of Responses	13	30	18	5	1	8
Disagree/Agree Summary	43	6				
Average Response	2.3					

This item is interpreted as above. Of interest is the high proportion of "Don't Know" responses, which indicates a very honest answer for some staff members.

*1. A sound provision for gifted pupils is to give them work from a higher grade.

	SD	D	N	A
Summary of Responses	29	28	9	8
Disagree/Agree Summary	57	8		
Average Response	2.0			

This item is interpreted according to the preceding pattern.

20. The danger of elitism, such as "I'm special, I'm gifted," developing when the gifted are taken out of the regular classroom for special provisions cannot be overcome.

	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
Summary of Responses	9	42	9	7	1	6
Disagree/Agree Summary	51	8				
Average Response	2.2					

This item did not contribute to the GAKS, was the last on the questionnaire and had 6 respondents who marked it "Don't Know." The combined disagree score was 51 in contrast with a combined agree score of 8.

2. The term "gifted" should be avoided in naming a program for the gifted.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	3	5	12	29	21
Disagree/Agree Summary	8	50			
Average Response	3.8				

This item did not contribute to the GAKS because experts do not agree on the matter. While the teachers gave the full range of responses, the general consensus was in the direction of agreement with the statement.

4.1.4 Divergence

Nine items exhibited divergence, or the expression of a strong minority opinion. Usually this was at least a one-third versus a two-thirds split. The reader is reminded again that consensus to divergence of opinion is a continuum, and the dividing lines are somewhat arbitrary.

*4. Other children in a classroom generally do not know who the gifted pupils are unless the teacher so labels them.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	16	38	5	13	2
Disagree/Agree Summary	54	15			
Average Response	2.2				

This item, #4 on the questionnaire, contributed to the GAKS. The combined disagree score was 54 and the combined agree score was 15.

*10. Gifted pupils can be identified at an early age, such as Grade 1 or even kindergarten.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	3	12	9	36	9
Disagree/Agree Summary	15	45			
Average Response	3.5				

Figures for this item should be interpreted in the same was as were those shown for previous items.

*14. The special needs of gifted pupils can be taken care of in the regular classrooms by the classroom teachers.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	19	27	10	14	2
Disagree/Agree Summary	46	16			
Average Response	2.3				

These figures can be interpreted according to the pattern employed above.

18. Teachers can identify gifted pupils in their classrooms with a high degree of accuracy.

	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
Summary of Responses	1	14	11	33	8	7
Disagree/Agree Summary	15	41				
Average Response	3.5					

This item, #18 on the questionnaire, did not contribute to the GAKS. The combined disagree score was 15, the combined agree score was 41. Seven persons recorded "Don't Know" responses to this item. The average score was similar to that of item 10.

9. Every student with a high enough IQ (say 130 or higher) should be included in giftedness programs.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Summary of Responses	13	31	9	14	4
Disagree/Agree Summary	44	18			
Average Response	2.6				

Figures for this item should be interpreted in the same manner as those for previous items.

7. A program for gifted pupils should be truly voluntary, that is, the decision to participate should not be based on pressure from parents or teachers.

	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
Summary of Responses	2	14	14	24	16	5
Disagree/Agree Summary	16	40				
Average Response	3.6					

This item was not part of the GAKS, was seventh on the questionnaire, and the distribution of responses from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree was as shown, with 5 respondents marking Don't Know.

The remainder of the items which exhibited divergence also showed school differences, in the sense that the staff of one school responded quite differently from all of the others. For this reason, the full table on which the analysis of each of the items was made is presented.

15. Resource rooms and resource teachers for the handicapped should gradually move toward including enrichment materials and enrichment teachers for the gifted.

On this item (see Table 4.1) the combined disagree score was 23, (7 + 16) and the combined agree score was 37 (25 + 12). School A differed from the others most markedly. The "Don't Know" responses totalled 5.

Divergence was associated to some extent with these factors: none of the items were chosen by the authors as part of the Giftedness Knowledge and Attitude Score, where presumably the experts are to some extent agreed. As might be expected, there were school differences in responses for items which exhibited the most divergence. Finally, in some cases staff members were least confident in their responses as indicated by higher than usual marking of "Don't Know."

Table 4.1
Distribution of Responses by School for #15

School	No. Forms Returned	Tally of Responses SD	D	N	A	SA	DK	Total 1-5	Average 1-5
A	17	2	6	1	3	1	3	13	2.6
B	16	3	2	2	4	5	0	16	3.4
C	5	0	1	0	3	0	1	4	3.5
D	13	0	5	2	4	1	0	12	3.1
E	12	2	2	0	3	3	1	10	3.3
F	12	0	0	2	8	2	0	12	4.0
Totals	75	7	16	7	25	12	5	67	3.3

17. In addition to the special programs, gifted pupils should be required to do all of the regular classroom work.

The interpretation of the responses summarized in Table 4.2, shown below, follows the pattern displayed for Item 15 above. The combined disagree score was 32, and the combined agree score was 25. In this case two schools, A and D, differed from the rest. It is also interesting to note that only two "Don't Know" responses were registered.

Table 4.2
Distribution of Responses by School for #17

School	No. Forms Returned	Tally of Responses SD	A	N	D	SA	DK	Total 1-5	Average 1-5
A	17	2	2	5	3	5	0	17	3.4
B	16	1	9	3	1	2	0	16	2.6
C	5	0	2	1	1	0	1	4	2.8
D	13	0	3	2	6	2	0	13	3.5
E	12	0	5	2	2	1	1	10	2.9
F	12	2	6	2	2	0	0	12	2.3
Totals	75	5	27	15	15	10	2	72	2.9

6. There is a structured giftedness program or curriculum in our school.

Table 4.3
Distribution of Scores by School for #6

School	No. Forms Returned	Tally of Responses SD	D	N	A	SA	DK	Total 1-5	Average 1-5
A	17	3	7	2	5	0	0	17	2.5
B	16	3	5	3	4	0	1	15	2.5
C	5	1	1	0	1	1	1	4	3.0
D	13	0	7	1	2	0	3	10	2.5
E	12	4	3	0	5	0	0	12	2.5
F	12	0	1	0	8	2	1	11	4.0
Totals	75	11	24	6	25	3	6	69	2.8

This item did not contribute to the Giftedness Attitude and Knowledge Score. It was the sixth on the questionnaire. As shown, 11 of the 75 responded Strongly Disagree (SD), 24 Disagree (D), 6 Neither Agree Nor Disagree (N), 25 Agree (A) and 3 Strongly Agree (SA). It is of interest to note that 6 responded Don't Know (DK).

After combining, the total number of disagree scores was 35, contrasted with a total of 28 agree scores. The average score for all of the schools combined was 2.8.

The reader may be intrigued enough to look back to the description of the program in School F to speculate why the staff were so confident that there was a giftedness program or curriculum in their school.

It is not accidental that a high "Don't Know" count is associated with divided opinion.

Figures in Table 4.3, based on Item #6, should be interpreted in the same manner as the figures in Table 4.1 and 4.2.

The nine divergent items were marked by divided opinion, usually at least a one-third to two-thirds split. On the most divergent of the items there are school differences. Some divergent items receive a heavier than usual "Don't Know" response. Four of the items, those exhibiting the least divergence, contributed to the GAKS score.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO DILEMMAS IN EDUCATING THE GIFTED

4.2.1 General Procedure

The second part of the questionnaire for the elementary school personnel included two problems or dilemmas which were to be resolved by the participants. The open ended responses were analysed according to their content.

4.2.2 Dilemma #1: Role Models or Extra Work

The following statement was given on the questionnaire:

> Very frequently teachers and their school face difficult choices. Teachers want the gifted to remain in their classrooms to serve as role models, to spark the class, to learn to live and work with average children, and for similar reasons. At the same time, with 20 to 30 pupils, teachers recognize that they haven't the time to do an adequate job of providing for the special needs of the gifted, who get their work done so quickly, can easily become bored, need challenging, and the like. What is the best solution to this dilemma?

Of the 75 returns, 72 included a response to this dilemma. These responses were initially classified into two categories: those proposing provisions outside of the classroom (41 responses) and those proposing a solution within the classroom (31 responses). Examples and additional analyses follow.

The essence of the first solution was expert help from "specialized" teachers, with specially prepared curricular materials, and a centre akin to a resource room. A number of verbatim statements follow.

> The ideal situation would be to have the gifted leave the classroom for specific times to work with a professionally trained resource person.

Some respondents carefully spelled out that the bulk of the time would be spent in the classroom, although two proposed as much as one third to half time outside. However, those who mentioned time more commonly suggested "an hour or two a week." Many responses included the idea that the projects planned outside of

the classroom would be worked on in the gifted student's spare time in class. Concern for completing the regular classroom work was also expressed.

> The truly gifted child who completes his regular classroom work satisfactorily should be allowed to leave the room to work on a project. But his normal classroom work must meet the standard expected of everyone else in the class.

Many of the solutions proposed called for specialized help for teachers. The resource room concept includes this idea, but the emphasis (or time spent) can be on working with the gifted students to develop the required curricular offerings (special projects) or on working with teachers to help them. Help for teachers is illustrated in this proposed solution.

> Give the teacher some assistance in terms of materials, resource people, structured programs to meet the pupils' needs in the school or within the classroom. Personnel is probably the biggest need. We need people to set up programs, oversee and assist.

There is, in this solution quoted above, a strong element of a "within the classroom" way of handling the dilemma. In fact, many of the solutions classified as those with some provisions outside of the classroom contained a heavy element of enrichment within the classroom.

> The best solution would be smaller classes. However, when not possible, the teacher could treat her students as a "split grade." The regular class would handle the normal load of work while the gifted students would be assigned <u>additional</u> research on whatever subject the <u>whole</u> class was handling (eg. spring, growing things, reports and displays) so that the whole class could profit. This could be coupled with learning centres that students could go to, stocked on the basis of the September parent-teacher sessions....

The rich variety of responses also included proposals for inservice education for teachers, aides or interns to work with the gifted and providing extra duties for the gifted (eg. tutorial). The most frequently mentioned provisions were specially prepared personnel, and resource rooms.

The second solution to the problem posed in dilemma #1 involved the students remaining in the classroom. Many suggestions called for materials and the help of specially prepared personnel. However, coupled with these was the idea that these provisions would enable the classroom teacher to cope.

> A bank of self-correcting, manipulative, progressively more challenging materials coded for grade level and interest areas could be made available to each classroom teacher.

A similar thought is expressed in the following solution to dilemma #1.

> A person in charge of the gifted program could supply all the materials and resources to the classroom teacher on a regular basis. In this way the teacher can concentrate on the rest of the class.

More direct help within the classroom setting is suggested by this solution.

> Facilitators or consultants could provide materials and help set up work areas within the classroom for the students. An added advantage to this is that other students could benefit from these "new" experiences. We have many extras within the curriculum and texts which could be provided for the students.

The staff member who proposed the most complete "within the classroom" solution spelled out in detail how a teacher could best provide for the special needs of a gifted student.

> Ask the student to express his/her own interests, suggest that they bring recent articles/objects in the line of their interest area, invite the child to have lunch with you to share and discuss these interests. Try to encourage, support, and challenge the child with discussion, articles, models. Provide verbal feedback. Meet regularly each week to share new knowledge, formulate the next question or area or topic of research.

Few teachers would disagree with the procedures proposed, but many would object that this solution overlooked the second part of the dilemma as posed.

Other "within the classroom" solutions included high interest enrichment centres in the classroom, smaller classes, help for teachers by specialists, provision of materials, individualized programs for the gifted, and specially prepared kits for use by the gifted.

The analysis of the 72 solutions proposed for the dilemma of providing for the special needs of the gifted in a classroom of 20 to 30 students, supports this statement by one principal.

> I have no solution to this problem that does not involve a great deal of extra work on the part of the teacher.

4.2.3 Dilemma #2 Special Groups or Classes and Elitism

The following statement was given on the questionnaire:

> Gifted pupils can be brought together once a week in their

> own school, or oftener. Such special grouping could expand to special classes in large schools, or even special schools to which the gifted are transported. Curricular resources and specialized teachers could be used to develop the higher thinking skills of analysing, synthesizing, and evaluating. Creativeness or divergent thinking could also be developed, and pupils could be guided in individual projects through individual program plans. However, there may be risk that they would think of themselves as special or better; that peers may identify them and "put them down" as "brains," that parents might unwisely brag about their gifted children, and that public opposition would develop against such special groups or classes or schools. What is the best solution to this dilemma?

Of the 75 returns, 69 included a response to this dilemma. As before, these responses were classified; however, the reactions of staff were more varied. An educational program to develop more accepting attitudes in students, parents, or both was the major solution of 22. Another 18 would essentially avoid the problem by having the gifted remain in their regular classrooms. Fourteen thought that the danger of such attitudes developing was not great, or if they did, "that's the way the world is." The solution of seven staff members was largely to avoid labelling, and a further eight didn't know, had no comment, or responded with no solution.

Attempts to influence attitudes was the favorite solution. Here is an example.

> Education of pulic attitudes is necessary so that it is not a "crime" to be recognized as smart or bright.

Several respondents suggested that moral values such as a Christian attitude, acceptance of others as they are, and concern for one's fellow men be taught.

> They need to learn not only to accept their own giftedness, but to see it in the context of the human family.

Another similar statement covers most of the ideas expressed by those who saw influencing people's attitudes as the solution to the dilemma.

> Think positive. Attempt to foster the Christian attitudes of appreciation of each person's giftedness with the parents as well as with pupils. We have to accept each person and their talents. In our schools we must stress that God-given talents be used for the good of all. That each is different is a fact of life.

The next most favored solution was chosen by 18 respondents. This solution, if it was a solution, was to avoid the problem by keeping the gifted in their own classrooms, or at least within

their own schools, and then not in special classes.

> Programs designed for the gifted ought to be done within the school the children attend. I do not believe in putting them all in one class or one school. These children live in the same world as everyone else and must learn to cope and at the same time develop the giftedness they have.

The third solution was to accept that the attitudes described may well develop. Another aspect of this was that even if the gifted develop the "I'm special" attitude, and others "put them down" as "brains," it is not a serious problem. An example of each follows.

> These "gifted" children are known to be "different" anyway. Other students in the regular classroom identify these students in a very early grade. I feel each student had to deal with it in his own way, with parental and teacher advice and guidance.

The other aspect, that the problem is not serious, is illustrated below.

> So far in the program that has been operating in our schools we have not seen this type of thing developing among the students or parents.

The solution proposed by seven respondents was to avoid labelling particularly to avoid the use of the term "gifted."

In general, respondents found the second dilemma harder to deal with, as evidenced by seven who made no response at all, and a further seven who said "I don't know" or made comments which did not address the problem.

Table 4.4
Mean GAKS Score and Type of Solution to Dilemmas by School

		Dilemma 1			Dilemma 2					
School	Score	0	1	2	0	1	2	3	4	5
A	38	-	8	9	-	4	4	2	5	2
B	41	1	9	6	2	2	6	3	2	1
C	32	-	5	-	-	-	2	2	1	-
D	36	-	6	7	-	2	3	4	3	1
E	37	1	7	4	2	-	2	2	6	-
F	41	1	6	5	2	-	5	1	1	3
Totals	38	3	41	31	6	8	22	14	18	7

Notes: GAKS Score = Giftedness Attitude and Knowledge Scale Score
The "Total" for the Score column is the average of the scores for all of the teachers.

Key to solution categories
Dilemma 1

0 = No response.
1 = Proposed some provisions for the gifted outside of, or in addition to, what is done in the classroom or can be done by the classroom teacher.
2 = Proposed provisions for the gifted in the regular classroom, made by the classroom teacher, without mention of expert help, materials, resource room, etc.

Dilemma 2

0 = No response.
1 = No solution proposed; eg. "I don't know."
2 = Try to change attitudes of students or parents or both.
3 = Accept things as they are; the world is like this; it is not a serious problem.
4 = Avoid segregation. Don't take gifted pupils out of their classrooms.
5 = Avoid labelling. Don't use the term "gifted."

4.3 SUMMARY

It is not surprising that the within-classroom enrichment dilemma was seen by a majority of the respondents as best solved by leaving the student in the classroom, coupled with providing the teacher with expert assistance, curricular materials and special projects for the gifted. Respondents were divided in the mention of "pull out" time (41 favored) or essentially wholly within the classroom (31). The message that came through clearly from all was that teachers need help.

The dangers of elitism occuring when the gifted were segregated proved to be difficult for the respondents. Some would avoid the problem by leaving the students in their own classes (18), some would avoid labelling (7), some would accept the inevitability of the attitudes developing (14), and the largest number (22) would attempt to change the attitude of students, parents, or both.

CHAPTER 5: JUDGMENTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview or summary of the evaluation. At the elementary school level, the Edmonton Catholic School System was using an evolutionary approach to developing provisions for the gifted. Procedures had been experimented with as early as 1974. A major lesson derived was that school-based provisions were more likely to endure than provisions based on outside assistance. A corollary of this was that if provisions for the gifted were to be genuinely school-based, they would likely differ to some extent from school to school.

The major principles stated above were evident in the six school studied in this evaluation. The provisions in effect were indeed school based, and as was expected, they did vary from school to school. It is remarkable that they did not vary more than was the case. Probably the imperatives of giftedness and the logic of provisions for the gifted inevitably produce a certain uniformity.

A spirit of exploration, of experimental try-out, was evident in the schools studied. No provisions for the gifted can be developed without some notion of the nature of giftedness, how to identify the gifted, and the needs of the gifted. The tentative approach to the answers to these questions was commendable in the six schools. There was an absence of the "we know the answers" spirit.

Stake's Countenance Model for program evaluation was not entirely applicable in the present study. The evolutionary nature of the provisions meant that the schools had a program that was not yet completely developed. Objectives had not been fully formulated by the central authority nor by the individual schools. The evolutionary procedures adopted obviated uniform guidelines for selecting the gifted and for teaching them. While assistance was available through a consultant based in the central office, the procedures employed for dealing with gifted students were developed largely at the school level. In addition to these various factors, another very important one was that provisions for the gifted had been in place for a relatively short time and were in a state of flux. For these reasons Stake's model for program evaluation did not apply in its entirety.

Following the procedures advocated in Stake's Responsive Model this study included "personal observations" of teachers, counsellors, principals, students, system personnel and others. The mode was unstructured interviews, listening, recording and analysing. These data were the source of purposes (goals or objectives), concerns and issues, procedures used, products (if any), and other aspects of an evaluation study.

This document is the formal report on the evaluation. In the

spirit of formative evaluation, direct feedback to respective individuals or groups has been ongoing, and will be recapitulated here.

The sections which follow deal with goals and objectives and their evaluation; selection procedures and their evaluation; the nature of provisions for the gifted and their evaluation; expected results and their evaluation; products and their evaluation; satisfactions expressed and their evaluation; problems encountered and their evaluation, conclusions and recommendation; and an epilogue.

5.2 SCHOOL-BASED PROVISIONS THAT ENDURE

The system coordinator for education of the gifted had concluded, based on ten years of experience, that school-based provisions were more likely to endure than those dependent upon outside assistance. Outside assistance is usually temporary in nature, and when it is withdrawn the provisions tend to disappear. The spirit of "it is ours" permeates truly school-based provisions.

The evaluators concur with these conclusions and during the evaluation reminded the coordinator of the anticipated effects of task assignments of catalyst teachers attached to schools, in part as follows:

> The help provided should be enduring, as, for example, in advising on the procurement of materials. It should not be in the nature of services which the school can carry out on its own, as, for example, the application of selection procedures. It should not be directly involved with delivery of the special provisions for the gifted, such as teaching, except as the catalyst teachers are trying out for themselves new procedures. It should serve as a clearinghouse for procedures carried out in different schools. It should develop examples of extensions of the present curriculum for the gifted. These two are endless.

5.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The evaluation did not uncover any written statement of goals or objectives so labelled. However, it was possible to infer implicit goals and objectives at three separate levels: the system level; the school level; and the pupil level. The evaluators hold the view that to enunciate written statements of objectives during the early stages of development of provisions for the gifted is premature, and concur with this absence. It is their view that when goals and objectives are inferred from data, the same data should not be used to determine whether the goals or objectives are being attained, because this would involve circular reasoning.

5.3.1 System Goals

It went without saying that the primary goal of the system was one stated by Alberta Education (1978) that forms the basis of all special education programs:

> The ultimate aim of education is to develop the abilities of the individual in order that he might fulfil his personal aspirations while making a positive contribution to society.

Implicit goals and objectives of the school system appeared to be as follows:

1. Transferring decision making, regarding provisions for the gifted, to the schools.
2. Encouraging schools to make such decisions.
3. Providing some expertise to the schools, by way of catalyst teachers, system coordinators, etc.
4. Providing inservice education for teachers, including information, demonstration of procedures, etc.
5. Providing needed supplies and materials.
6. Evaluating the provisions for the gifted that have been developed.

5.3.2 School Objectives

The school objectives were not explicit, therefore they had to be inferred from statements by principals and staff, and from ongoing activities in each of the schools. There was unanimity, or at least strong agreement regarding the following objectives:

1. SOMETHING must be done for gifted students because they need special attention, and are entitled to it.
2. Provisions for the gifted should be accepted by teachers.
3. Gifted children should be challenged so that they are motivated and interested.
4. Better teaching should result from gifted programs.
5. Gifted children should learn to be confident and to work independently.
6. Gifted children should understand their own giftedness.
7. Thinking skills should be developed in gifted children.
8. Creativity in gifted children should be fostered.

5.3.3 Pupil Objectives

The so-called school objectives applied to all students for whom special provisions were being made. In addition, however, there were unique objectives that applied to individual students or to small groups, but not to everyone receiving special treat

ment. These objectives were being identified by the system consultant through the development of Individual Program Plans (IPP's). However, owing to the evolutionary nature of the provisions for the gifted, these IPP's had not been released to the schools for use. In fact, some were not completed until late in the year.

5.3.4 Evaluation of System Goals

Any school system can choose to introduce new provisions by fiat throughout the system, or gradually through pilot or lighthouse schools. The Edmonton Catholic School Board chose the latter route. Many considerations bear on this choice. The first, commonly referred to as universality, is very attractive. Provisions for gifted students, by Board decree, in every school serves all constituents equally. The problem is, what service? To move suddenly from provisions in a few elementary schools as was the case in 1983-84 to require them in all schools ignores the problem of resources: skilled and experienced teachers, specialists, materials, and so on. The evolutionary approach permits the more gradual allocation of scarce resources. It encourages diversity, in that each school makes decisions about provisions. It is an essential try-out of procedures in a field relatively new to the system. While there are other considerations which bear on implicit goals 1 and 2, the evaluators concur with the following goals which were perceived to be system goals:

1. Transferring decision making, regarding provisions for the gifted, to the schools.

2. Encouraging schools to make such decisions.

It is obvious that if the provisions are well received in the pilot or lighthouse schools, there will be public pressure for them to be extended. This is as it should be.

Implicit system goals 3, 4, and 5 state various aspects of help for those on the firing line. Of all the items on the questionnaire this idea received the strongest endorsement from school staff. This was demonstrated by the overwhelming agreement with the statement:

> For gifted programs to be successful it is essential to have adequate curricular resources and profesionals' time.

What the teachers are saying is that you can't make bricks without straw. Resources are needed, and must be provided if the provisions for the gifted are to be successful. The evaluators endorse goals 3, 4, and 5, which appeared to be system goals. They are restated below:

3. Providing some expertise to the schools, by way of catalyst teachers, system coordinators, etc.

4. Providing inservice education for teachers, including information, demonstration of procedures, etc.

5. Providing needed supplies and materials.

Another implicit system goal appeared to be to evaluate provisions for the gifted as they developed. The current evaluation implies this goal. Sillito and Wilde (1983), after a first-hand and extensive study of provisions for the gifted in Canada and the United States, made this observation:

> In any program for the gifted, both program and student evaluation are crucial (p.248).

Many programs are transitory because there was no feedback that results from regular evaluation. For a new and different program, it is even more essential.

In conclusion, it should be stated that the implicit systen goals which were identified are deemed to be commendable. Those dealing with the provision of resources must be seriously considered by the administration and the Board.

5.3.5 Evaluating School Objectives

It has been noted several times in this report that decentralization of provisions for the gifted to the schools inevitably implies variability. The evaluators identify a commonality: teacher knowledge and attitude. It is a commonplace statement that education involves a teacher and a child. The Gifted Attitude and Knowledge Scale showed considerable variation among the staff of different schools. Formative evaluation would be promoted by drawing this to the attention of each. This was done in the following manner. The GAKS with scoring key was sent to each principal, along with the GAKS score for each school A to F, with the identity of the recipient's school marked. A few words of explanation were provided, and a suggestion that the staff might wish to work on improving their attitudes and knowledge about giftedness if this was appropriate. This procedure was intended to promote objectives 1, 2, and 3, listed below, in schools with lower GAKS scores. Those with higher scores (40 - 50) had reached a reasonable level.

1. SOMETHING must be done for gifted students because they need special attention, and are entitled to it.

2. Provisions for the gifted should be accepted by teachers.

3. Gifted children should be challenged so that they are motivated and interested.

The evaluators were not able to judge school objectives 4, 5, and 6, which were as follows:

4. Better teaching should result from gifted programs.

5. Gifted children should learn to be confident and to work independently.

6. Gifted children should understand their own giftedness.

With respect to school objectives 7 and 8 a number of instances of thinking exercises and creativity exercises were encountered. These objectives were:

7. Thinking skills should be developed in gifted children.

8. Creativity in gifted children should be fostered.

No sequential program in these areas was found in any school. Those who have studied the matter intensively affirm that sequential curricula in these areas do not exist. It is too much to expect a school staff to develop such. It is probably too much to expect a school system to develop sequential curricula in thinking skills and creativity. It may be too much for a province, but it is at least at that level that the matter should be addressed.

5.3.6 Evaluation of Pupil Objectives

The IPP's were not yet available to schools and were not in use, so no evaluation of this aspect of the objectives was possible. That they were being considered, and planned for use was in itself commendable.

5.4 SELECTION PROCEDURES

Procedures for identifying potential students for special instruction and for making final selections varied considerably from one school to another. Three of the schools employed rather formal procedures, that is, there were definite stages, each concluding with decisions that could be defended on the basis of data at hand. The other three schools used more informal procedures where nominations were made and decisions reached on a more subjective basis.

5.4.1 Formal Procedures

A formal procedure for selecting students for inclusion in a gifted category typically involved the following stages:

1. From the student records, identify all students whose IQ's were 120 or higher.
2. Collect, from teachers, a list of students they would nominate for consideration for inclusion in a gifted group. Nominations were made independently of the list based on high IQ.
3. Compare the lists (an eighty percent overlap was typical),

and eliminate names appearing on one list only. A few exceptions, based on unique characteristics of pupils would be permitted. At this stage the pool of students is expected to be much larger than the number of students that can be accommodated in special programs.

4. Through use of the Renzulli forms and procedures make a final selection. This usually involved reducing the size of the group to the number that could be accommodated.
5. Consult the parents of the students selected, and get their permission.

The procedures usually involved school counsellors or school psychologists, the central office consultant, and sometimes outside consultants from Special Education at the University of Alberta.

5.4.2 Informal Procedures

Schools using more informal procedures typically carried out these steps:

1. Ask teachers to submit names of prospective candidates for receiving special provisions. Teachers were given criteria for selection such as good grades, motivation, expressed curiosity, good behavior, etc.
2. Final selection by the principal, in consultation with teachers, and counsellors (if available).

5.4.3 Evaluation of Selection Procedures

Expert opinion generally calls for a more lavish deployment of manpower than schools can afford to use in selection. Often a review committee and an appeal procedure are included. The need for this kind of elaborate structure is greater if the provisions are very visible, if the program is publicly labelled "gifted," if it very obviously provides superior quality of treatment, if it is an "all or none" affair (the student is either in or out), if it takes place in segregated classrooms or schools, etc. The less visible the provisions, the more it is based in class or in school, the less difference in quality of provision, etc., the less need there is for elaborate structures for identification.

Identification must also, in a practical sense, be geared to provisions. What is the use of identifying some exceptional ability (a far-fetched example would be an unusual sense of balance) if there are no provisions for its development?

While there are other important aspects of identification that might be considered, at the current stage of development, the identification procedures in each of the schools showed a reasonable structure and was reasonably well geared to provisions. The avoidance of over-use of IQ data was commendable. In the upper elementary grades, school achievement would be a useful addition to the generally used formal procedures.

The case for congruence between procedures for identifying the gifted and school provisions for their education is strong. This congruence was found.

5.5 NATURE OF PROVISIONS FOR THE GIFTED

Provisions for the gifted varied considerably. Two of the schools used the "pull out" method exclusively, and typically took the gifted pupils out of regular classes for one and one half hours per week. The time of day for the out-of-class instruction was varied so that the same classes were not involved all the time. However, morning classes were ordinarily not disturbed, therefore the disruption usually involved subjects such as social studies and physical education. The pull out sessions typically involved special instruction in problem solving and critical thinking, as well as field trips, special work on computers, etc.

Two of the schools provided primarily enrichment procedures in the regular classrooms and some pull out. Providing special instruction was irregular because it depended upon the availability of the special consultant as well as the projects being undertaken by the students. The enrichment procedures within the classroom made up the major part of the special provisions for the gifted.

Two of the schools provided enrichment procedures, entirely, for the gifted students. In one of these schools it was considered to be the most satisfactory method, but in the other the principal and staff felt it was a stop gap measure only. If resources had been available they would have used the pull out method.

5.5.1 Evaluation of Provisions for the Gifted

The description above, supplemented by that provided for the program in each school (section 3.2) clearly illustrates that the provisions for gifted pupils were in general at a rudimentary stage. There was no program as such (in the sense of a sequential curriculum) in any school. The evolutionary procedures had just reached the stage of provisions for challenging the gifted. Even though non-sequential and sporadic, there were provisions: in school A a play had been produced and computer classes were held once a week; in school B, where the provisions were wholly in-class, one Grade 4 boy was writing a book on sports; in school C there were public speaking, speech arts, solo work by gifted musicians in band, computer work in Grades 4 - 7, piano lessons (for a fee) by a private instructor in release-time school hours, swimming lessons, and special projects arising from class work; in school D there was a visit to a pond, the stocking of an aquarium with pond life, and expectation of reports to the class from the gifted students; in school E provisions for the gifted were wholly in-class so tended to be invisible; and in school F (which was just starting on provisions for the gifted) there were exercises once a week in problem solving, magic square problems, creativity, and similarities.

The reader is reminded of the point made in section 5.3.5 Evaluating School Objectives that sequential curricula for the gifted do not exist, that the most that can be expected of individual teachers and schools is inevitably sporadic, and that there is a crying need for further work in this area related to the Alberta curriculum.

5.6 EXPECTED RESULTS

Responses to a question about "expected results" put to the principals revealed some of the implicit objectives mentioned earlier. The two schools new to the program gave the clearest and most positive objectives. They expected the students to be more motivated, to show fewer signs of boredom, to be better able to work independently, and to have more confidence in themselves. Two other schools (the ones having some experience with gifted provisions) expressed some of the same expectations, but in addition mentioned other dimensions. They expected improved teaching for all of the students to occur, disciplinary problems in the classroom to diminish, and a happier learning environment to exist for all. The two schools with the long established provisions for the gifted tended to be rather vague. One school mentioned the importance of arousing interest and curiosity, and the other gave no positive expectation. Instead, it was stated that the main result expected was the avoidance of elitism.

Five of the six schools expected students to show high interest and curiosity. Preventing boredom was specifically stated by three of the principals as an expectation.

5.6.1 Evaluation of the Expected Results

Different emphases are to be expected if individual schools are responsible for provisions for the gifted. Each of the expectations enunciated was worthy. It is significant that the schools with the longest experience with provisions for the gifted were most modest in their expectations. It is one thing to plan and to expect that "we will accomplish X, Y and Z" and it is another thing to have worked on provisions for some time, and be equally confident that in fact X, Y and Z were produced. Each of the schools can profitably look again at objectives.

5.7 PRODUCTS

Most principals claimed that the provisions had not been in use long enough for tangibile products, but when pressed all of them could name some. Some of the products mentioned were, a play, a film, a book, an aquarium, remembrance day project, a TV production, contributions to a school paper and to a science fair.

While there were products, it appeared that they came from students especially interested and/or talented in particular areas. The majority of gifted students were perhaps not directly involv-

ed in producing something tangible. In almost every case where a product was involved, the whole class and sometimes the whole school benefited.

5.7.1 Evaluation of Products

There is inevitably considerable overlap between provisions, expected results, and products. However, it was felt that an attempt to identify tangible products was worthwhile. Consistent with the developing nature of the provisions they are scattered and few. It is significant and commendable that some of the products resulted from individual and some from group effort.

5.8 SATISFACTION EXPRESSED BY TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS

All of the schools stated that reactions by teachers, students and parents were generally quite positive. Teachers tended to "feel good" about being able to do something for gifted students; students were generally very positive (although one student dropped the special provisions because "it was too much work"); and parents were generally very positive. An occasional complaint from parents resulted from expectations that their children would blossom into geniuses overnight after entering the program, or more frequently, they asked why their children were not included.

While teachers were very positive about what the special provisions were accomplishing, some were concerned with the extra work involved, and felt that they could not maintain the pace indefinitely. This view was most prevalent in the "enrichment within the classroom" situation.

5.8.1 Evaluation of Expressions of Satisfaction

It is the view of the evaluators that such expressions constitute real evidence of the value of provisions. It was their view that the schools should undertake to keep a record of expression of both satisfaction, and (if any) dissatisfaction.

5.9 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

Without exception, the schools identified the primary problem to be INSUFFICIENT STAFF TIME TO DEAL ADEQUATELY WITH GIFTED PUPILS. Other problems stated by two or more of the principals were:

1. Insufficient resources.
2. Insufficient support from central office.
3. Need for more inservice work for teachers of the gifted.

Some interesting comments were made only once:

1. More commitment to teaching gifted pupils is needed on the part of the teachers.
2. Different expectations from gifted pupils exist in the different schools. More uniformity is needed.

3. Some teachers seem to be afraid of gifted students.
4. Mobility of parents poses a problem for gifted students.

Several teachers were surprised by the variety of behaviors exhibited by some students identified as gifted. Some students would dawdle unless continually prodded; some were high achievers in a few areas and very ordinary in others; and students in the primary grades generally needed specific instruction as opposed to being able to learn on their own.

When asked if elitism posed a problem, the typical response from the principals was that there was the odd incident, but nothing of any consequence. Two schools attributed the lack of a problem to the fact that the term "giftedness" was not used; one school reported the most difficulty with students in the core French program, but the main problem was among the junior high school grades offered in the school.

None of the principals expressed any real concern with elitism as a problem. In general it seemed that the problems that had arisen had been dealt with successfully.

It seemed clear that the schools had been on their guard regarding elitism.

5.9.1 Evaluation of Problems Encountered

Most of the above problems have already been considered in this report and have been the subject of evaluation and recommendation. That elitism was not found to be a vexing problem was most commendable. School principals should continue to be on their guard about this matter because in many jurisdictions it is regarded as as a widespread and difficult problem.

This section on problems encountered at the school level should be useful for educators contemplating making provisions for gifted pupils.

5.10 CONTINUITY

The subject of this study was six schools offering special instruction for gifted pupils in the 1983-84 school year. Of these six schools, five are continuing to make special provisions in the 1984-85 school year. One of the schools offering special instruction for gifted students for the first time in 1983-84 discontinued the program because of insufficient staff. In this school provisions were based largely on the time, interest and expertise of a resource room teacher who was no longer available in the fall of 1984. Also, a parent volunteer who assisted in providing for the gifted was no longer available.

5.10.1 Evaluation of Continuity

One of the goals expressed by the system consultant was that pro-

visions in a school for gifted pupils, once in place, should endure. It was noted that, of the six schools involved in the evaluation in the spring of 1984, five were continuing to offer special provisions for gifted pupils in the fall. While not a perfect score, five out of six is excellent.

5.11 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provisions for the gifted are more likely to endure if they are planned and delivered by the regular teaching staff. Provisions that depend on outside experts tend to collapse when his/her services are withdrawn.

2. Provisions for the gifted presently in place depend to a large part on extra duties, voluntarily assumed, by some of the staff members. This is an unstable situation.

3. The central office consultant probably has as much practical knowledge of educating gifted pupils as anyone in the province. His services have, however, been spread too thinly, and as a result much of his effort has not been as productive as it might have been had it been more concentrated. Additional contacts, with some interest and expertise, are needed in the schools so that the consultant's experience can be used to advantage.

4. The school system has some worthy provisions for gifted elementary pupils in place. Further development is needed if a PROGRAM for gifted pupils is to be developed. In particular, a clear set of goals is needed, along with suggestions for instruction and evaluation. A centrally located resource room for teachers is needed, along with some plan for providing inservice education for teachers involved with the gifted program.

5.12 EPILOGUE

The evaluation of programs for the gifted in the six schools was well under way when the Minister of Education for the province announced province-wide financial support for education of the gifted. The Edmonton Separate School System and its consultant for education of the gifted profited enormously from the experience with the evolutionary development of provisions for the gifted. While not part of this evaluation, the results of these experiences can clearly be seen in the proposals submitted to the Board and adopted for use in the system commencing in September, 1984 (see Appendix 2). The proposals for provisions for the gifted in the Edmonton Catholic School District developed from seed planted in the experimental provisions which were previously tried out.

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APPENDIX 1

MODELS OF EVALUATION

MODELS OF EVALUATION

Robert Stake has delineated two models of evaluation (outlined below) called the Countenance Model and the Responsive Model. The first (Stake, 1967) extended the knowledge of the day. The second (AERA Monograph Series #7, 1974; and Stake, 1975) was based on his experience in attempting to evaluate the arts in education, and the Twin-City Institute for Talented Youth.

The Countenance Model

INTENTS	OBSERVATIONS		STANDARDS	JUDGMENTS
		ANTECEDENTS		
		TRANSACTIONS		
		OUTCOMES		
DESCRIPTION MATRIX			JUDGMENT MATRIX	

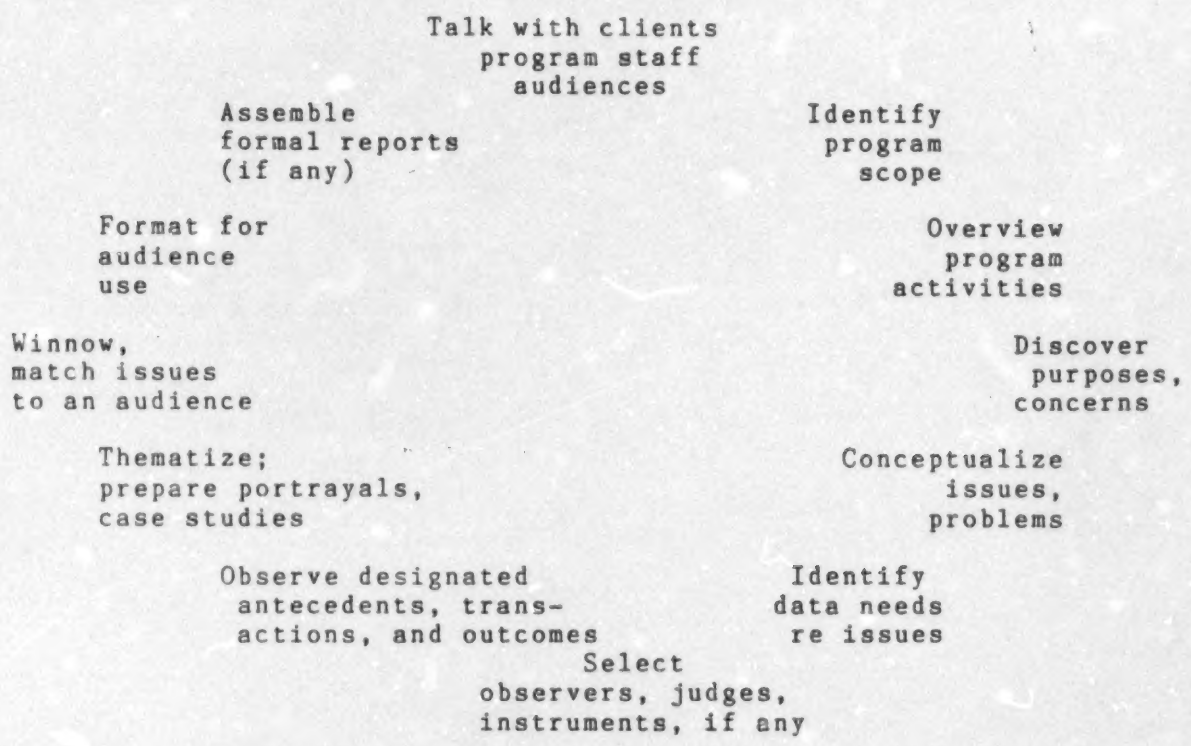
RATIONALE

In the Countenance Model of evaluation the first step is to specify the intents (which include goals or objectives) at all three levels (antecedents, transactions and outcomes). The second step is to collect data for the observation column at the same three levels and to check if the intents were actualized. Next the standards are invoked. Standards can be absolute, as for example, specific knowledge or skills; or they may be relative, as for example, the performance of others. The fourth step is to interpret any differences between observed performance and standards. The reader may observe from this summary a heavy focus on what data to collect, examine, analyze and make judgments about.

The Responsive Model focuses more on how to do the evaluation. The clock diagram must not be interpreted to mean that the procedure starts at one point and proceeds from there either clockwise or counterclockwise. But it does not follow the steps usually followed in applying the countenance model: (1) a statement of goals; (2) data collection by objective measures; (3) comparison with standards; (4) evaluation report. A paraphrase of another description (Guba and Lincoln, 1981, p. 25-26) of the Responsive Model may capture the process. This is presented below under the heading "Twelve Steps of the Responsive Model."

The Responsive Model

"Clock" Diagram of Stake's Responsive Model (Stake, 1975, p.20)



Twelve Steps of the Responsive Model

1. The evaluator talks with concerned parties to "gain a sense of their posture" about the purpose of the evaluation.

2. Based on (1) and on documentary sources the evaluator places limits on the scope of the program evaluation.

3. The evaluator makes personal observations about what goes on, and notes differences, if any, between (1) and (2).

4. The evaluator discovers the purposes of the project, and the concerns of the various audiences.

5. The evaluator begins to conceptualize the issues and problems the evaluation should address.

6. The evaluator is now in a position to think about the design of the evaluation -- the data or information needed to deal with the purposes, issues, concerns and problems identified.

7. The evaluator selects instruments to generate the data required (often observers or judges; i.e. <u>human</u> instruments).

8. The evaluator collects the data and processes them.

9. After the data have been collected and processed, the evaluator shifts to information reporting. The best reporting is that which is most natural.

10. It is not desirable for the evaluator to report on every issue or problem, therefore it is necessary to select. Also, not every audience will want or need to know about every issue or concern, so these aspects must be matched to audiences.

11. The format to use in reporting to various audiences must be determined. "Reports may therefore take the form of written statements, discussion sessions, round-table discussions, newspaper articles, films, exhibits, or whatever may be deemed appropriate (Guba and Lincoln, 1981).

12. As a final step, the evaluator prepares a formal report if one is required.

One of the criticisms of the Countenance Model is that it is too complex. The twelve-cell matrix is too much; however it can be simplified, and it is understandable. A criticism of the Responsive Model is that it fails to provide a plan in advance for the evaluation. Stake holds that both can be used in the same evaluation.

For reasons based in psychology the authors believe that the Countenance Model is not suited to the evaluation of emerging, developmental, experimental tryouts of provisions, programs or curricula. To require precise statements of goals, or more particularly of objectives, too early in the procedure demands closure too soon, before the fledgling (or hatching) provisions have had time to be tried out. In addition, for reasons based on order or timing, the authors are loathe to demand precise statements of goals or objectives too early in the development of provisions for the gifted. It may be that the provisions, programs or curricula being proposed and tried out would promote goals or objectives valuable in themselves, but not the ones which were enunciated in advance.

Formative Evaluation, which undertakes to improve or better provisions, programs or curricula is best promoted by involving persons at the grass roots level. This is Responsive Evaluation. Too many splendid evaluation reports have been received only to end up on a shelf. The authors hope that responsive evaluation procedures will affect the processes being evaluated and also the persons who perform the educational tasks. If this is the case, there is some likelihood of lasting change and improvement.

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSAL FOR INCREASING SERVICE TO GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS IN THE EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

PROPOSAL FOR INCREASING SERVICE TO GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS IN THE EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Minister's Task Force on Gifted and Talented Pupils states: "...There is an urgent and critical need to recognize the gifted and talented pupils of Alberta and to provide adequately for their educational needs." (Planning and Research Branch, Alberta Education 1983)

This proposal is a response to the Minister's statement as well as the Board of Trustees' request for administrative direction to increasing services for gifted and talented students.

Department of Student Services
1984 06 04

DEFINING THE GIFTED AND TALENTED

In the Task Force Report (1983), it was recommended that Alberta Education accept and use the following definition of Gifted and Talented pupils:

> Gifted and talented pupils are those who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of exceptional performance. These are children who require differentiated provisions and/or programs beyond the regular school program to realize their contribution to self and society. (Planning and Research Branch Alberta Education, 1983)

Children capable of exceptional performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in one or several of the following areas:

a) general intellectual ability
b) specific academic aptitude
c) creative or productive thinking
d) visual and performing arts

In addition to this, the task force has also adopted the following more specific definition, suggested by Dr. Joseph Renzulli, a leading researcher and proponent of gifted education.

> Giftedness consists of an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits - these clusters being above average general abilities, high levels of task commitment, and high levels of creativity. Gifted and talented children are those possessing or capable of developing this composite set of traits and applying them to any potentially valuable area of human performance. (Renzulli 1978)

IDENTIFYING THE GIFTED AND TALENTED

The phenomenon of giftedness is complex. No single criteria such as an I.Q. score is sufficient. Systems with established programs use several criteria. The most frequently used items are:

a) Intellectual Ability
b) Academic Achievement
c) Teacher Rating

Data concerning intellectual ability and academic achivement are taken from cumulative records and teacher scored tests. Information regarding other aspects such as motivation and creativity is compiled through the use of rating scales.

The "Scale For Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students" by Joseph Renzulli is the most commonly used. During the 1982-83 school year, this instrument was used on a pilot basis in eight schools with twenty primary and elementary teachers taking part. This instrument was found to be very useful and is now being used by other schools in the district, as an aide to screening gifted pupils.

HISTORY OF SERVICE WITHIN THE E.C.S.D.

Programming for gifted students within the Edmonton Catholic School District, has been offered for the past ten years. In 1974 a program was established at St. Boniface School, on a pilot basis, to serve the needs of the grade six children. This program expanded to include children in grades four to seven and by 1978 three other schools sent students to St. Boniface for special classes once per week. Students were involved in projects such as: computer application and programming, critical thinking skills, mentorship, independent study projects, creative writing, and art.

In 1978, the pilot project teacher was appointed to serve as itinerant teacher for the gifted on a district level. The service model used was "part-time, pull-out". By 1981 nineteen elementary and one junior high school utilized this service for either a one or two year period. In 1982, this service was phased out in favour of a consulting service.

PRESENT SERVICE WITHIN THE E.C.S.D.

At the present time, the following programs and services are in place for gifted and talented students.

District Level

- One consultant in gifted/enrichment is available to assist school personnel in planning and implementing programs for gifted students.

- Many inservice sessions have been offered including sessions on: identification of gifted students, individualization of instruction, and differentiation of curriculum for gifted students.

- In cooperation with the Association for Bright Children, two confernces on the education of the gifted have been offered, the most recent in September 1983.

School Level

- Several schools (Bishop Savaryn, St. Anne, St. Teresa) are providing a pull-out program through which students are withdrawn from regular classes one or two hours a week to work on special projects.

- Eight schools (Anne Fitzgerald, St. Bernadette, St. Bonaventure, St. Dominic, St. Jerome, St. Nicholas, St. Vladimir) have been involved in a pilot project wherein students have been assessed and provided with limited individualized programs.

- Many schools provide enrichment within the regular classroom and within the regular curriculum. All subject areas encourage differentiation of instruction to meet individual needs including those of students gifted in the subject; this is done primarily through modification of assignments and expectations on the part of the classroom teacher. The extent to which programming is differentiated for gifted students depends upon how much the skills of the students differ from the others in the class, the skills and interests of the teacher, and the priority placed upon such differentiation by the school administration.

- At the high school level the Honors Program at Louis St. Laurent and Archbishop MacDonald, as well as the International Baccalaureate Program at Archbishop MacDonald, attract gifted students because of the additional challenge offered.

- At the junior high level the Academic Alternative Program offered at St. Rose attracts a high percentage of gifted students, many of whom go on to Archbishop MacDonald.

Although many schools have taken the initiative to provide some programming to the gifted and talented, these schools now require additional district level services to more effectively meet the needs of these students. In addition, schools which have not instituted a service to date, will require assistance.

PROPOSED SERVICE MODEL

It is proposed that the Edmonton Catholic School District expand its services to gifted and talented students through a systematic approach to planning, organizing and coordinating gifted education. The model developed by Dr. Joseph Renzulli, entitled The Individualized Program

Planning Model (IPPM) is recommended (see attached). Use of the IPPM is based upon certain assumptions regarding the nature of the gifted learner, the nature of the total school program and the nature of gifted programming.

- Many gifted students are capable of mastering the regular curriculum at a much faster pace and higher level of proficiency than students in the general population.

- Gifted students should be provided with opportunities to identify and pursue advanced topics and areas of study that hold special facination for them.

- The major focus of IPP's for gifted children must be placed on individual strengths rather than weaknesses.

- Gifted students are not an homogenous group. They are an especially heterogeneous group whose needs, strengths and interests vary greatly. Thus they require individual programs.

- Gifted and talented students do not "save" their unique characteristics and needs for the block of time that is set aside for a gifted program; their needs and characteristics are with them all day long, every day.

- Gifted students are already present in significant numbers in all schools, are being taught by regular classroom teachers and will continue to be there for the foreseable future.

- Effective educational programming is concerned with meeting the needs of all students; gifted education's goals should be embedded in that concern, not detached from it.

Philosophical Basis

Philosophically, the IPPM provides a structure to recognize the unique characteristics that lead to unusual learning or instructional needs and a planning process through which these needs can be met. Individualized programming or IPPM is a concept widely used in special education. It holds great potential for truly individualizing the learning experiences of gifted children.

Screening and Identification

The model allows for use and documentation of all possible

data/sources for screening and identification of the gifted, in a flexible manner, resulting in an effective instructional plan. This aspect of the IPPM was piloted successfully in the district (1983).

Support Services

Proponents of the IPPM approach (Renzulli and Trefinger) recommend that additional support services/catalyst teacher are required for successful implementation. The IPPM involves the regular classroom teacher and the catalyst teacher cooperatively, in preparation of the individual program profile, selection of activities and resources, monitoring and evaluation. Where appropriate, the student and parent are also involved in this process.

Role of the Catalyst Teacher

The catalyst teacher is primarily a resource and support service to the process as outlined above. Specifically, teachers in this position will:

- Assist with setting of program objectives
- Assist with setting of criteria
- Disseminate knowledge on teaching the gifted and talented
- Implement the process of screening, identifying and programming for gifted students
- Assist with the selection and preparation of materials

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IPPM APPROACH WITHIN THE E.C.S.D.

Although the Edmonton Catholic School District has committed funds to servicing the needs of gifted and talented students beyond the grants recently announced by Alberta Education for this pupose, the administration proposes that the district enhance its services to this population by implementing the IPPM approach in six elementary/junior high schools effective September 1984. This would require that two additional teaching positions/catalyst teachers be designated to work with these schools. Since the school population in need of this service will determine the extent and duration of support from the catalyst teachers, it will be necessary to review/evaluate the service to the respective schools on an ann[illegible] basis. Subsequent to the model being operational in a school(s), the catalyst teacher would move on to provide

the service in another school(s). Continued support services to those schools which have the model in place would be provided by the consultant in gifted education.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

Supports the Focus for Excellence

This model enhances the school districts' focus on excellence, specifically in terms of the effective schools project.

Provides for Local School Initiative

Implementation of the model is essentially school initiated and school based.

"Spin-Off" Benefit to Other Schools

As the catalyst teachers move on to new schools these effective teaching methods will spread throughout the district.

Benefit to All Students in the Classroom

Effective programming is concerned with meeting the needs of all students. The ultimate aim of education for the gifted should be recognition and response to any unique need and not merely to have a program. The skills and knowledge acquired by the classroom teacher in working with the catalyst teacher will benefit all students.

Professional Relationships Will be Enhanced

The IPPM approach promotes cooperative working relationships among various professionals within the school and district.

Eliminates the Specific Label of 'Gifted'

The social status associated with a segregated gifted program/school can often lead to negative responses on the part of parents and students who are excluded.

Provides a Wide Variety of Options and Activities

The program derives its activities from the strengths and interests of the individual student.

Responds to the Unique Needs of the Student

This approach 'listens' to the student rather than the assumptions about gifted students. Unfortunately, a certain mythology and confusion has grown around the phenomenon associated with giftedness. The brightest child is still a child emotionally and developmentally. A child labeled as gifted often has unrealistic expectations placed upon him/her by parents, teachers and peers. For example, it is unrealistic to expect that a gifted child will exhibit a maturity of behavior beyond his/her years, or that a child, brilliant in languages, will have the same aptitude in other areas.

KEY FACTORS TO SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

Commitment of Staff

The primary responsibility for implementation of the IPPM approach in the school will fall to the classroom teacher. Thus, the regular program must be healthy and the teacher committed. In support of this, the catalyst teacher must also be committed, well trained in the methodology and capable of earning the respect of his/her colleagues in the school.

The classroom teacher, catalyst teacher and other program components will require support from the principal and central administration.

Commitment of Parents

There is no doubt that parents of gifted and talented students are desirous of improved educational opportunities for their children. The IPPM approach requires that the parents become actively involved in identification of student strenghts and interests, selection of complimentary home activities and periodic review/revision of their child's individual program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Board of Trustees request that the administration bring forth a proposal for increasing services to gifted and talented students and the foregoing discussion of the Individual Program Plan Model, it is recommended that:

1. The Board of Trustees endorse implementation of the proposed Individual Program Plan Model.

2. Two catalyst teacher positions be established at a cost of approximately $80,000.00 to assist with implementation of the Individual Program Plan Model in selected schools.

3. The following school be approved for initial implementation of the Individual Program Plan Model effective September, 1984.

   Bishop Savaryn
   St. Clement
   St. Dominic
   St. Justin
   St. Maria Goretti
   St. Stanislaus

4. An additional budget in the amount of $3,000.00 be established to support the program.